

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"THE ROAD OF SURRENDER" | LUKE 1: 26-38 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

Have you ever had a week or month when all your plans seemed to go out the window?

"God Interrupts Our Ordinary" Luke 1: 26-29

Mary was a young woman, engaged to get married, when the angel Gabriel visits her. **In what ways would this angel be interrupting Mary's plans and life? How can God's interruptions in our lives become invitations to be part of something bigger?**

"God's Call Often Feels Impossible" Luke 1: 30-34

Gabriel tells Mary to not be afraid as she will conceive and bear a son to be named Jesus. Mary asks how can this happen? **What are things Mary would be confused about or afraid of? How is God's presence more reassuring than an explanation sometimes?**

"Surrender Turns Fear Into Faith" Luke 1: 35-38

The angel Gabriel explains this will be an act of the Holy Spirit and Mary responds by saying she's a servant and let it be. **What does this show about Mary's identity? What is hard about surrendering to God?**

"What Mary's 'Yes' Teaches Us" Luke 1: 26-38

Mary surrendered without understanding or knowing all the details. This required her to live by faith instead of control, allowing her to be part of God's larger story. **How is saying "yes" to God an act of faith? When have you said "yes" to God's interruption?**

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Jesus' birth came through a young woman who had different plans when God interrupted. Her act of surrender despite all the fears and changes allowed Mary to grow in faith and experience God's presence. **Have you been struggling with wanting control over your plans? How has God been interrupting and inviting you into something lately? How can you let go of needing to understand everything? Make time to ask God what is He inviting you into this week.**

The Road to Bethlehem

11-30-25

3 The Road of Surrender

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those watching online (2nd).
- B. Slide1 Christmas Eve: Please come join us on Wed Dec.24 at either 1,3 or 5pm, for our Christmas eve *all church service*. We will share a time of worship & message.
- C. Slide2 CFLC: Please bring in your foster children xmas gifts by NEXT SUN! 7th.
- D. Slide3 Women's Christmas Celebration: ladies, this Sat, Dec 6th at 9am-11am followed by *a craft boutique in the gym*. [1 Kelly Teaching. 10 Worshipers Leading. 20 Crafters Crafting. 4 Food Trucks Feeding. And a partridge in a Xmas tree!]
- E. Slide4 Church Prayer: Join us next Sunday at 1:30pm, Agape Room.
- F. Prayer: Lord, this morning You invite us into the *same posture* as Mary. In different contexts, a different time, with a different ask - but with the same trust, the same faith ... *may we respond with the same, Yes!*

II. Slide5 Intro: The Road of Surrender - Mary's "Yes" Changed History. [Promise, Preparation]

- A. Divine Detours: You ever have one of those weeks when everything you planned went out the window?
 - 1. Maybe you had your **calendar** all color-coded, appointments lined up, projects timed perfectly, **and then** life-happened.
 - a) The **call** you didn't expect. The **diagnosis** you didn't plan for. The **opportunity** that came at the worst possible time. **And** suddenly, the **carefully drawn roadmap of your life starts** looking more like *scribbles*.
- B. We like control! - We like to know what's next, to have a sense of order, structure, predictability. **But** sometimes **God** interrupts our plans *not to wreck them, but to redeem them*. [sometimes **His divine detours** are actually the beginning of something **sacred**]
- C. That's exactly what happened to a teenage girl from a small town called Nazareth.

1. She **wasn't** in a temple praying for a miracle. **She was probably just doing ordinary things:** *washing dishes, planning a wedding, booking a venue, dreaming about the future.* **When an angel showed up & changed everything.**

D. **Her story reminds us:** God's greatest work begins when we surrender our small plans to His great purpose.

1. So today we **walk with Mary down The Road of Surrender**, where faith doesn't mean you have it all figured out - it just means you're willing to say, **Lord, let it be to me according to Your word.**

E. **Slide6 Read** Luke 1:26-38.

III. **Slide7a 1 GOD INTERRUPTS OUR ORDINARY**

A. **In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth...** (26).

B. **A Common Girl in a Common Place**

1. A Common **Girl**, in a Common **Place**, living a Common **Life**, with her Common blue-collar **Fiancé**.
2. **Mary isn't a queen, prophet, or priest, just a young girl in a forgotten town.**
 - a) God's greatest stories often begin in *small, quiet places*.

C. **The Divine Interruption**

1. **God's call** rarely comes at a **convenient** time. **Heaven's interruptions often arrive disguised as *inconvenience*.** **But** if you listen closely, they might be **invitations**. (They maybe an invitation to something *eternal*)
2. **Remember when Moses was tending sheep, *the most normal task possible* ... when a bush caught fire!** God loves to interrupt our routine with **revelation**.
 - a) **Slide7b** "**Ordinary ground can become holy ground when God steps in.**"

D. **This is a GPS re-routing moment.** Plans interrupted, **but not off course.**

1. When God re-routes your path, it's **not rejection** - it's **redirection**.

IV. **Slide8a 2 GOD'S CALL OFTEN FEELS IMPOSSIBLE**

A. How will this be, since I am a virgin? (34) [her *1st recorded words* show *purity* & *humility*]

B. **The Promise Exceeds Her Understanding** [not like Zec's doubt in 18) **How?**]

1. God tells her something *humanly impossible*.

a) **Faith begins** where **explanations end**.

2. I guess this answers the song *Mary Did You Know?* - **Nope**, she didn't this?

C. **The Fear Factor**

1. **Fear of** what others would think, **fear of** the unknown, **fear of** inadequacy.

2. Yet God's word to her, and to us, **Do not be afraid!**

3. God never calls without **also assuring** His presence.

D. **Think of a seed planted** - Mary **couldn't** "make" the miracle, she could only **make room** for it.

1. **Slide8b** You don't have to **understand everything** to **trust God in something**.

E. *Not a *planned pregnancy* from Mary's standpoint - **but** it was from God's!

V. **Slide9a 3 SURRENDER TURNS FEAR INTO FAITH**

A. Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; **let it be** to me according to your word. (38)

B. **Slide9b** Known as *Mary's Fiat*. Which **didn't** mean she owned *a little Italian car*, w/good gas mileage. *Mary's Fiat* was a **decree**, **or** a **proclamation** in Latin. *Let it be*, **or** *Let it come into being*.

1. **Eg.** We go way back to Genesis to the **very 1st fiat**. When God said, **Dixit Deus: Fiat lux** **God said: Let there be light**. (Aka a *divine fiat*).

2. In the NT Jesus **didn't** invite Lazarus back to life, **but** instead **commands** it **Lazarus come forth!**

C. Mary's fiat was *important, clear, plain, and direct* - **but also** was sandwiched between **2 important statements**: *Behold, I am the servant of the Lord*. (I'm not the owner of the house, I'm *the lowest servant* to the house - the doule, female slave/servant). **And Let it be to me according to Your word**. (**Your Word!**)

1. Gabriel, I submit, I surrender. If the Lord wants me to have this baby, so let it be - let it come into being.

D. Slide9c The Posture of Surrender

1. Mary doesn't negotiate or demand proof.
2. Her "yes" is wholehearted, humble, and obedient. let it be to me ...
 - a) It seems that Mary's posture of surrender was not a passive surrender, but a joyful abandonment to God's will.
3. She doesn't know all that "yes" will cost, but she trusts the One asking.
 - a) C.S.Lewis frames Surrender as, a death to self and a birth of true identity in Christ.

E. Surrender Opens the Door to God's Greatest Work

1. The miracle of Christmas began not in a palace but in a willing heart.
2. Every movement of God in history starts with a surrendered "yes."
3. True faith doesn't remove fear, it simply trusts God more than fear. Or ...
 - a) Faith isn't the absence of fear - it's saying Yes even while afraid.
 - b) Hold up a blank page, Mary gave God her life like this blank page. No fine print. No conditions. Just, Let it be to me according to Your word.

- F. Slide9d Now let's add: Most Bible scholars and historians agree that Mary was likely between 13-16 yrs old here. In 1st-century Jewish culture: Girls were typically betrothed (legally engaged) soon after reaching puberty, often around age 12-14. Marriage followed about a year later.

1. So when you picture Mary - she's not a seasoned adult with years of spiritual maturity and life experience. She's a teenage girl, in a small rural town, probably 14/15 years old, hearing from an angel that she will carry the Son of God!
2. That makes her Yes all the more remarkable - a young girl with limited power, no privilege, and every reason to be afraid, yet she trusted God's Word completely.

VI. Slide10 4 WHAT MARY'S "YES" TEACHES US

1. God invites ordinary people *into extraordinary purposes*.
2. Surrender doesn't eliminate fear; *it transforms it into trust*.
3. When we release control, *God releases His power*.
4. The will of God may cost you something, but it will *never* cheat you of what's best.

B. Slide 11 7 Practical Points on Biblical Surrender for Us Today

1. Surrender begins with **trust**, not understanding.
 - a) Mary didn't understand how it would happen, she simply trusted **Who** was asking. Begin asking the Lord, *What are You inviting me into?*
2. Surrender means saying "yes" **before** knowing all the details.
 - a) God rarely gives full blueprints, only next steps. (Abraham, Moses, and Mary all had to move **before** they could see the whole picture).
3. Surrender trades control for **peace**.
 - a) We hold tight to plans because *control feels safe*, but **peace** never comes from *control*, only from **trust**.
4. Surrender isn't passive - it's **active obedience**.
 - a) Mary didn't sit in fear; she **acted** in faith. She traveled to Elizabeth's house, raised Jesus, followed Him to the cross. *Surrender looks like movement - one small act of obedience at a time.*
5. Surrender is **ongoing**, not one-time.
 - a) Mary's first "yes" wasn't her last. She kept surrendering: *through childbirth, parenting, and the pain of the cross*. End each day asking, *Lord, what did I try to take back today that I need to give You again?*
6. Surrender aligns us with **God's larger story**.
 - a) For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. Phil.2:13
 - b) See your obedience as part of **God's global story**, not just a *personal decision*.

7. Surrender transforms fear into **worship**.

a) When Gabriel left, Mary didn't panic - she praised. Her surrender turned into a song (Luke 1:46-55 *Magnificat*).

C. **Next Week:** The Road of Obedience. *Mary said yes, but Joseph shows us what it looks like to walk that yes out when **obedience** costs you.*

D. **Slide12a Your Own Yes!**

E. *Maybe* your plans **haven't** gone the way **you expected**. *Maybe* life looks different than **the script you wrote**. *The detours, the disappointments, the divine interruptions, none of them surprise God.* In fact, they might be *His invitations*.

1. Mary's story reminds us that **surrender isn't giving up; it's giving over**.

Slide12b *"It's trusting God's heart when you can't trace His hand."*

2. It's **trusting** that **the Author** of your story knows *how to finish* what **He's** begun.

3. God **isn't** looking for **perfect people** - just **willing ones**. **And the same Spirit** who overshadowed Mary *now dwells in us*, asking the same simple question: ***Will you trust Me enough to say yes?***

F. Because God's greatest work still begins when **ordinary people**, in **ordinary places**, whisper **extraordinary words** like, *Let it be to me according to Your word*.

G. **Prayer:** Take a moment to *whisper to God*, if you mean it, *Lord, let it be to **me** according to **Your word***.

H. **Keywords:** surrender, Mary, Yes.

I. Elisabeth Elliot, *Let Me Be a Woman*, "The will of God is not something you **add** to your life. *It's a course you choose. You either line yourself up with the Son of God ... or you capitulate to the principle which governs the rest of the world.*"

J. C. S. Lewis, "Give up **yourself**, and you will find your **real self**."